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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS

1. Summary: Major Chinese-language Taiwan dailies focused their coverage December 7 on the possible personnel reshuffle in the DPP and Cabinet and the possible merger between the KMT and the PFP in the wake of last Saturday's elections. The centrist "China Times" ran an exclusive news story on its front page with the headline: "Bian Invites [Legislative Yuan President] Wang Jin-pyng to Head the Cabinet," while the front-page headline story of the pro-unification "United Daily News" said "Chance of [PFP Chairman James] Soong Running for the Taipei City Mayorship is 80 Percent." The pro-independence "Liberty Times" reported on its page two that "DPP Members Believe [Vice President] Annette Lu Has Strong Ambitions to Vie for the DPP Chairmanship." The pro-independence "Taiwan Daily," on the other hand, carried an exclusive interview with Presidential Office Senior Advisor Koo Kuang-min on its front and third pages saying that Koo urged President Chen to declare Taiwan-centered awareness as his core policy.

2. Several newspapers continued to editorialize December 7 on the reforms of the DPP government. An editorial in the "United Daily News" discussed Taiwan's cross-strait policy, urging President Chen to use a 'framework of economic and trade interaction' to sustain 'political peace and stability' across the Taiwan Strait. End summary.

"Cross-Strait Relations: Use the 'Framework of Economic and Trade Interaction' to Sustain 'Political Peace and Stability'"

The pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] commented in an editorial (12/7):

". [President] Chen Shui-bian's remarks prior to last Saturday's [island-wide] elections that 'cross-strait relations will become more limited should the pan-Blue camp win a sweeping victory' indicated that he was clearly aware that cross-strait policy is essential to the ruling of Taiwan. Chen's remarks aroused strong antipathy [among people] partially because of his threatening tone and partially because he insisted on lying to the people since he knew what he said was not viable.

"Following Saturday's elections, DPP's Straits Exchange Foundation Chairman Chang Chun-hsiung asked, 'How could [the government] possibly restrict cross-strait relations?' Chang's view was not just his own but a consensus shared by many Taiwanese people and foreign companies in Taiwan. In the wake of the 3-in-1 elections, there were mounting voices inside the DPP calling for the [government] to renounce its 'isolation policy,' moderately pursue 'globalization,' and open the three links across the Taiwan Strait. Such calls not only reflected the post-election situation in Taiwan but were also a natural trend resulting from changes in history and in the world. .

"We invite Chen Shui-bian to repeat his self-invented slogan several times: 'Establish a cross-strait framework for peaceful and stable interaction!' The sole and only way to carry out the spirit of this slogan is to 'use a 'framework of economic and trade interaction' to sustain [cross-strait] 'political peace and stability.'"

KEEGAN